

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CPR-01 A-01 SS-15 NSC-05 CIAE-00
DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02
/048 R

DRAFTED BY AF/W:TWMSMITH:BA
APPROVED BY AF-DBBOLEN
AF/EX-EGKRYZA

-----290735Z 019559 /10

R 290053Z MAR 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY COTONOU

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 069063

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, DM, US

SUBJECT: BOYA INQUIRES ABOUT APPOINTMENT OF US AMBASSADOR

1. AT THE SECRETARY'S RECEPTION FOR AFRICAN AMBASSADORS MARCH 23, BENIN AMBASSADOR BOYA TOOK AF/W DIRECTOR ASIDE AND ASKED WHEN USG WOULD APPOINT AN AMBASSADOR TO BENIN. BOYA RECALLED THAT HE HAD RECENTLY BEEN IN COTONOU WITH THE UN COMMISSION INVESTIGATING THE COUP ATTEMPT, AND THAT HE HAD SEEN THE RESIDENCE OF US AMBASSADOR. THIS APPARENTLY LED HIM TO WONDER WHEN THE US WOULD APPOINT AN AMBASSADOR TO BENIN.

2. AF/W DIRECTOR REPLIED THAT WE WITHDREW OUR AMBASSADOR FROM BENIN FOR REASONS OF WHICH BOYA WAS AWARE. WE NOW HAD A NEW ADMINISTRATION. APPOINTMENTS IN THE NEW ADMINISTRATION WERE PROCEEDING DELIBERATELY AND THERE WERE MANY OFFICIALS, SOME AT THE SECRETARY'S RECEPTION, WHO HAD BEEN NOMINATED BUT NOT YET CONFIRMED. THE
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ADMINISTRATION WOULD PROC:ED TO FILL THE WASHINGTON POSITIONS AND THEN EXAMINE THE MAJOR EMBASSIES ABROAD WHICH ARE TRADITIONALLY FILLED BY POLITICAL APPOINT:ES FOLLOWING THAT THE DEPARTM:NT WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY TURN ITS ATTENTION TO THOSE EMBASSIES WHICH ARE NORMALLY FILLED BY CAREER OFFICERS. AF/W DIRECTOR SAID THAT HE WOULD BE

IN TOUCH WITH AMBASSADOR BOYA AS SOON AS THERE WAS ANY NEWS TO COMMUNICATE CONCERNING THE EMBASSY IN BENIN, BUT THAT UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES DESCRIBED ABOVE BOYA SHOULD NOT READ TOO MUCH INTO FURTHER DELAY IN THE APPOINTMENT OF AN AMBASSADOR.

3. AF/W DIRECTOR THEN RAISED THE PROSPECT OF TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS IN BENIN AND SAID THAT WE WERE CONCERNED BY THE ANNOUNCEMENT IN THE OFFICIAL PRESS THAT THE TRAVEL OF FOREIGNERS AND PARTICULARLY DIPLOMATS WOULD BE CONTROLLED. HOWEVER, WE HAD NOT YET SEEN THE DECREE AND THUS DID NOT KNOW WHAT THE GOVERNMENT'S INTENTIONS WERE. WE POINTED OUT TO BOYA THAT THE PROSPECTIVE RESTRICTIONS WERE THE SUBJECT OF MEETING BY THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS IN COTONOU AND UNDOUBTEDLY WOULD BE THE SUBJECT OF REPRESENTATION BY THE CORPS TO THE BENINESE GOVERNMENT. BOYA SAID "THAT'S FINE. THE US IS NOT THE ONLY COUNTRY AFFECTED. DON'T GET OUT IN FRONT. WORK THROUGH THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS." WE SAID THAT WAS PRECISELY WHAT WE WERE DOING BUT THAT WE WERE CONCERNED BY THE FACT THAT WE HAD PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS STATIONED AT VARIOUS POINTS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY AND SEVERAL SITES OF AID PROJECTS TO WHICH WE HAD TO HAVE EASY UNIMPEDED ACCESS. BOYA TOOK THIS POINT IN BUT DID NOT COMMENT.

CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SOCIAL RECEPTIONS, AMBASSADORS, PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS, TRAVEL CONTROLS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 29-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE069063
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: TWMSMITH:BA
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770106-1143
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770311/aaaaaiug.tel
Line Count: 88
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 688b01b0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2958562
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BOYA INQUIRES ABOUT APPOINTMENT OF US AMBASSADOR
TAGS: PFOR, DM, US, (BOYA, THOMAS SETONDJI)
To: COTONOU
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/688b01b0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009